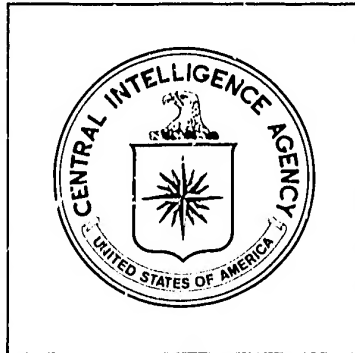


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STAFF NOTES:

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South Asia**

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MIDDLE EAST – AFRICA – SOUTH ASIA



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Libya

Students Resisting Military Training Program

Libyan university students have become embroiled with the government over President Qadhafi's compulsory military training program. The students are threatening demonstrations unless they are allowed to delay their training until after graduation; the government has countered with warnings of massive arrests.

When the program was first announced last July, many students felt the training would be an interesting diversion from their studies and few expected a rigorous drill. But, over the last six months, stories about the poor conditions in the training camps, the strict military regimen, and night exercises three or more times a week have dampened enthusiasm.

All able-bodied males and females over seventeen are required to participate in this latest feature of Qadhafi's two year old "cultural revolution." Many parents outraged by the prospect of sending their daughters to the camps have complained about the radical departure from conservative Libyan tradition, but most groups have until recently undergone the training without much grumbling.

The current tension stems from the government's insistence that university students train for one week every two months during the next twelve months. President Qadhafi apparently was willing to discuss the matter, but was given such an unceremonious reception late last month from students and faculty at the University of Tripoli, he promptly cancelled a scheduled school vacation, thus aggravating the situation.

Prime Minister Jallud fared even worse during meetings last week at Tripoli and Benghazi universities. His audience was reportedly unpersuaded by his argument that the military training program had become all the more necessary because of alleged threatening activity by the US Sixth Fleet. The meetings ended with all parties becoming even more angry and frustrated.

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Morocco

King Hassan's Throne Day Speech

King Hassan announced on Monday--the 14th anniversary of his accession to the throne--the indefinite postponement of parliamentary elections. Last September, the King expressed his desire for parliamentary elections this year. Hassan cited as the reason for the delay Morocco's continuing dispute with Spain over Spanish Sahara and the enclaves of Ceuta and Melilla. He added that he still hoped to hold general elections once Morocco's "usurped territories" were liberated.

In the interim, King Hassan stressed the need for national unity. He expressed his desire that political organizations work within the government and invited the opposition political parties "to do their share in the functioning of the state." In the past, the various parties have balked at joining a government of national unity unless it had a clear mandate from Hassan to organize elections. This time, however, some of the parties may be willing to join the government on the King's terms. The parties have grown weak and disorganized during the decade they have been out of power.

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India

*Prime Minister Maintains Tough Line
Toward Narayan*

Prime Minister Gandhi's firing on March 2 of minister of state for works and housing, Mohan Dharia, indicates her continuing opposition to any reconciliation with J. P. Narayan, the 72-year old reform movement leader seeking to topple her government. In recent weeks, Dharia, along with several other Congress Party mavericks in parliament, has publicly urged cooperation between Mrs. Gandhi and Narayan in the interest of finding remedies for domestic problems which the reform leader asserts have worsened under Mrs. Gandhi's leadership. Dharia says he does not agree with Narayan's demand that the allegedly corrupt Bihar state government be ousted, or with Narayan's "concept of a democracy without political parties. Dharia, however, does favor a constructive joint effort to alleviate corruption in government, unemployment, and inflation, and to consider reforms in the electoral and educational systems.

Dharia's firing is likely to exacerbate a growing rift within the Congress Party over how to deal with Narayan. Moderates and rightists in the party are generally sympathetic with Narayan's appeal for a new moral order, and they are particularly unhappy about the vigorous anti-Narayan position of Congress' fair-weather ally, the pro-Moscow communist party.

Many Congress Party leftists, on the other hand, support Mrs. Gandhi's denunciation of the Narayan movement. She claims the various small opposition parties supporting Narayan are irresponsible and opportunistic. She says they are trying to capitalize on India's economic difficulties and Narayan's popularity in order to replace her "responsible and stable" Congress Party government with an unworkable alternative.

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Mrs. Gandhi seems to have had little hesitation about removing Dharia, despite the risk of revitalizing an undercurrent of left-right division within her party. In the past, she has unsuccessfully tried to remove the threat by dissolving formal intra-party groups representing the left and right.

Mrs. Gandhi's move against Dharia may be a signal that she will not tolerate outspoken criticism from her appointees. It is likely to have special meaning for the 66-year old agriculture minister, Jagjivan Ram who is a potential contender for the prime ministership. Ram has been calling for reforms within the Congress Party and warning that the close alliance with the communists raises the danger of their infiltration into party ranks.

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